

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA**

**Case No. 22-CR-20104-JEM(s)(s)(s)(s)**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**vs.**

**MARIO ANTONIO PALACIOS PALACIOS,**

**Defendant.**

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**PLEA AGREEMENT**

The United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida ("this Office") and MARIO ANTONIO PALACIOS PALACIOS (hereinafter referred to as the "defendant") enter into the following agreement:

1. The defendant agrees to plead guilty to Counts One, Two, and Three of the Fourth Superseding Indictment, which counts charge that:

(a) beginning in or around February of 2021, and continuing through on or about July 7, 2021, in the Southern District of Florida and in a place outside the United States, including Haiti and elsewhere, the defendant did knowingly combine, conspire, confederate, and agree with other persons known and unknown to the Grand Jury, to provide material support and resources, as defined in Title 18, United States Code, Section 2339A(b), that is, personnel, including themselves, and services, knowing and intending that they be used in preparation for, and in carrying out, a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 956(a)(1), that is, a conspiracy to kill and kidnap a person outside of the United States, and on July 7, 2021, the death of the President of Haiti, Jovenel Moise resulted; all in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2339A(a).

(b) beginning in or around February of 2021, and continuing through on or about July 7, 2021, in the Southern District of Florida and in a place outside the United States, including

Haiti and elsewhere, the defendant did provide material support and resources, as defined in Title 18, United States Code, Section 2339A(b), that is, personnel, including himself, and services, knowing and intending that they be used in preparation for, and in carrying out, a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 956(a)(1), that is, a conspiracy to kill and kidnap a person outside of the United States, and on July 7, 2021, the death of the President of Haiti, Jovenel Moise, resulted, all in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 2339A(a) and 2; and

(c) beginning in or around February 2021, and continuing through on or about July 7, 2021, in the Southern District of Florida and in a place outside the United States, including Haiti and elsewhere, the defendant did knowingly and intentionally combine, conspire, confederate, and agree with other persons known and unknown to the Grand Jury, at least one of whom having been within the jurisdiction of the United States, to commit at a place outside the United States, acts that would constitute murder and kidnapping if these crimes were committed in the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States, that is, the murder and kidnapping of the President of Haiti, Jovenel Moise, and one or more conspirators did commit one or more acts within the jurisdiction of the United States, to effect the purpose and object of the conspiracy, all in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 956(a)(1).

2. This Office agrees to seek dismissal of Count Four of the Fourth Superseding Indictment, as to this Defendant, after sentencing.

3. The defendant is aware that the sentence will be imposed by the Court after considering the advisory Federal Sentencing Guidelines and Policy Statements (hereinafter "Sentencing Guidelines"). The defendant acknowledges and understands that the Court will compute an advisory sentence under the Sentencing Guidelines and that the applicable guidelines

will be determined by the Court relying in part on the results of a pre-sentence investigation by the Court's probation office, which investigation will commence after the guilty plea has been entered. The defendant is also aware that, under certain circumstances, the Court may depart from the advisory Sentencing Guidelines range that it has computed, and may raise or lower that advisory sentence under the Sentencing Guidelines. The defendant is further aware and understands that the Court is required to consider the advisory guideline range determined under the Sentencing Guidelines, but is not bound to impose a sentence within that advisory range; the Court is permitted to tailor the ultimate sentence in light of other statutory concerns, and such sentence may be either more severe or less severe than the Sentencing Guidelines' advisory range. Knowing these facts, the defendant understands and acknowledges that the Court has the authority to impose any sentence within and up to the statutory maximum authorized by law for the offenses identified in paragraph 1 and that the defendant may not withdraw the plea solely as a result of the sentence imposed.

4. The defendant also understands and acknowledges that, as to Count One, Two, and Three, the Court may impose a statutory maximum term of imprisonment of up to life imprisonment, followed by a term of supervised release of up to a lifetime of supervised release. In addition to a term of imprisonment and supervised release, the Court may impose a fine of up to \$250,000 on each count. The Court may also order that the sentences on Counts One, Two and Three run consecutively.

5. The defendant further understands and acknowledges that, in addition to any sentence imposed under paragraph 4 of this agreement, a special assessment in the amount of \$300 will be imposed on the defendant. The defendant agrees that any special assessment imposed

shall be paid at the time of sentencing. If the defendant is financially unable to pay the special assessment, the defendant agrees to present evidence to this Office and the Court at the time of sentencing as to the reasons for the defendant's failure to pay.

6. This Office reserves the right to inform the Court and the probation office of all facts pertinent to the sentencing process, including all relevant information concerning the offenses committed, whether charged or not, as well as concerning the defendant and the defendant's background. Subject only to the express terms of any agreed-upon sentencing recommendations contained in this agreement, this Office further reserves the right to make any recommendation as to the quality and quantity of punishment.

7. This Office and the Defendant agree that, although not binding on the probation office or the Court, they will jointly recommend that the Court make the following findings and conclusions as to the sentence to be imposed:

(1) Role in the offense: That the Defendant should receive a two-level decrease for being a minor participant in the criminal conspiracy that led to the assassination, pursuant to Section 3B1.2(b) of the Sentencing Guidelines. Specifically, the defendant did not participate in the planning of the criminal activities, had no decision-making authority within the conspiracy, and expected but never received a salary for his participation. *See* U.S.S.G. § 3B1.2, application note 3(C).

(2) Sentencing Guidelines Enhancements: Pursuant to Section 3A1.4(a) of the Sentencing Guidelines, the defendant is subject to a 12-level enhancement because Counts One, Two, and Three are felonies that involved, or were intended to promote, a federal crime of terrorism.

8. This Office agrees that it will recommend at sentencing that the Court reduce by two levels the Sentencing Guidelines level applicable to the defendant's offense, pursuant to Section 3E1.1(a) of the Sentencing Guidelines, based upon the defendant's recognition and affirmative and timely acceptance of personal responsibility. If at the time of sentencing the defendant's offense level is determined to be 16 or greater, this Office will file a motion requesting an additional one level decrease pursuant to Section 3E1.1(b) of the Sentencing Guidelines, stating that the defendant has assisted authorities in the investigation or prosecution of the defendant's own misconduct by timely notifying authorities of the defendant's intention to enter a plea of guilty, thereby permitting the government to avoid preparing for trial and permitting the government and the Court to allocate their resources efficiently. This Office, however, will not be required to make this motion and this recommendation if the defendant: (1) fails or refuses to make a full, accurate and complete disclosure to the probation office of the circumstances surrounding the relevant offense conduct; (2) is found to have misrepresented facts to the government prior to entering into this plea agreement; or (3) commits any misconduct after entering into this plea agreement, including but not limited to committing a state or federal offense, violating any term of release, or making false statements or misrepresentations to any governmental entity or official.

9. The defendant is aware that the sentence has not yet been determined by the Court. The defendant also is aware that any estimate of the probable sentencing range or sentence that the defendant may receive, whether that estimate comes from the defendant's attorney, this Office, or the probation office, is a prediction, not a promise, and is not binding on this Office, the probation office or the Court. The defendant understands further that any recommendation that this Office

makes to the Court as to sentencing, whether pursuant to this agreement or otherwise, is not binding on the Court and the Court may disregard the recommendation in its entirety. The defendant understands and acknowledges, as previously acknowledged in paragraph 3 above, that the defendant may not withdraw his plea based upon the Court's decision not to accept a sentencing recommendation made by the defendant, this Office, or a recommendation made jointly by the defendant and this Office.

10. The defendant agrees that he shall cooperate fully with this Office by: (a) providing truthful and complete information and testimony, and producing documents, records and other evidence, when called upon by this Office, whether in interviews, before a grand jury, or at any trial or other proceedings; (b) appearing at such grand jury proceedings, hearings, trials, and other judicial proceedings, and at meetings, as may be required by this Office; and (c) if requested by this Office, working in an undercover role under the supervision of, and in compliance with, law enforcement officers and agents. In addition, the defendant agrees that he will not protect any person or entity through false information or omission, that he will not falsely implicate any person or entity, and that he that he will not commit any further crimes.

11. This Office reserves the right to evaluate the nature and extent of the defendant's cooperation and to make that cooperation, or lack thereof, known to the Court at the time of sentencing. If in the sole and unreviewable judgment of this Office the defendant's cooperation is of such quality and significance to the investigation or prosecution of other criminal matters as to warrant the Court's downward departure from the advisory sentencing range calculated under the Sentencing Guidelines and/or any applicable minimum mandatory sentence, this Office may make a motion prior to sentencing pursuant to Section 5K1.1 of the Sentencing Guidelines and/or

Title 18, United States Code, Section 3553(e), or subsequent to sentencing pursuant to Rule 35 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, informing the Court that the defendant has provided substantial assistance and recommending that the defendant's sentence be reduced. The defendant understands and agrees, however, that nothing in this agreement requires this Office to file any such motions, and that this Office's assessment of the quality and significance of the defendant's cooperation shall be binding as it relates to the appropriateness of this Office's filing or non-filing of a motion to reduce sentence.

12. The defendant understands and acknowledges that the Court is under no obligation to grant a motion for reduction of sentence filed by this Office. In addition, the defendant further understands and acknowledges that the Court is under no obligation of any type to reduce the defendant's sentence because of the defendant's cooperation.

13. It is understood that should the defendant knowingly provide incomplete or untruthful testimony, statements, or information pursuant to this agreement, or should the defendant falsely implicate or incriminate any person, or should the defendant fail to voluntarily and unreservedly disclose and provide full, complete, truthful, and honest knowledge, information, and cooperation regarding any of the matters noted herein, the following conditions shall apply:

(a) The defendant may be prosecuted for any perjury or false declarations, if any, committed while testifying pursuant to this agreement, or for obstruction of justice.

(b) The government may use against the defendant the defendant's own admissions and statements and the information and books, papers, documents, and objects that the defendant has furnished in the course of the defendant's cooperation with the government.

(c) The defendant will not be permitted to withdraw the guilty pleas to those counts to which defendant hereby agrees to plead in the instant case.

14. The defendant is aware that Title 28, United States Code, Section 1291 and Title 18, United States Code, Section 3742 afford the defendant the right to appeal the sentence imposed in this case. Acknowledging this, in exchange for the undertakings made by the United States in this plea agreement, the defendant hereby waives all rights conferred by Sections 1291 and 3742 to appeal any sentence imposed, including any restitution order, or to appeal the manner in which the sentence was imposed, unless the sentence exceeds the maximum permitted by statute or is the result of an upward departure and/or an upward variance from the advisory guideline range that the Court establishes at sentencing. The defendant further understands that nothing in this agreement shall affect the government's right and/or duty to appeal as set forth in Title 18, United States Code, Section 3742(b) and Title 28, United States Code, Section 1291. However, if the United States appeals the defendant's sentence pursuant to Sections 3742(b) and 1291, the defendant shall be released from the above waiver of his right to appeal his sentence. The defendant further hereby waives all rights conferred by Title 28, United States Code, Section 1291 to assert any claim that (1) the statute(s) to which the defendant is pleading guilty is/are unconstitutional; and/or (2) the admitted conduct does not fall within the scope of the statute(s) of conviction. By signing this agreement, the defendant acknowledges that the defendant has discussed the appeal waiver set forth in this agreement with the defendant's attorney. The defendant further agrees, together with this Office, to request that the Court enter a specific finding that the defendant's waiver of his right to appeal the sentence imposed in this case and his right to appeal his conviction in the manner described above was knowing and voluntary.



15. The defendant agrees, in an individual and any other capacity, to forfeit to the United States, voluntarily and immediately, any right, title, and interest to all assets, foreign or domestic, (i) of any individual, entity, or organization engaged in planning or perpetrating any Federal crime of terrorism (as defined in section 2332b(g)(5)) against the United States, citizens or residents of the United States, or their property, and all assets, foreign or domestic, affording any person a source of influence over any such entity or organization; (ii) acquired or maintained by any person with the intent and for the purpose of supporting, planning, conducting, or concealing any Federal crime of terrorism (as defined in section 2332b(g)(5) against the United States, citizens or residents of the United States, or their property; (iii) derived from, involved in, or used or intended to be used to commit any Federal crime of terrorism (as defined in section 2332b(g)(5)) against the United States, citizens or residents of the United States, or their property; or (iv) of any individual, entity, or organization engaged in planning or perpetrating any act of international terrorism (as defined in section 2331) against any international organization (as defined in section 209 of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 4309(b)) or against any foreign Government, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 981(a)(1)(G), as incorporated by 28 U.S.C. § 2461(c), and the provisions of 21 U.S.C. § 853. In addition, the defendant agrees to forfeiture of substitute property pursuant to 21 U.S.C. § 853(p).

16. The defendant further agrees that forfeiture is independent of any assessment, fine, cost, restitution, or penalty that may be imposed by the Court. The defendant knowingly and voluntarily agrees to waive all constitutional, legal, and equitable defenses to the forfeiture, including excessive fines under the Eighth Amendment to the United States Constitution. In addition, the defendant agrees to waive: any applicable time limits for administrative or judicial

forfeiture proceedings, the requirements of Fed. R. Crim. P. 32.2 and 43(a), and any appeal of the forfeiture.

17. The defendant also agrees to fully and truthfully disclose the existence, nature and location of all assets in which the defendant has or had any direct or indirect financial interest or control, and any assets involved in the offenses of conviction. The defendant agrees to take all steps requested by the United States for the recovery and forfeiture of all assets identified by the United States as subject to forfeiture. This includes, but is not limited to, the timely delivery upon request of all necessary and appropriate documentation to deliver good and marketable title, consenting to all orders of forfeiture, and not contesting or impeding in any way with any criminal, civil or administrative forfeiture proceeding concerning the forfeiture.

18. The Defendant also agrees to assist this Office in all proceedings, whether administrative or judicial, involving the forfeiture to the United States of all rights, title, and interest, regardless of their nature or form, in all assets, including real and personal property, cash and other monetary instruments, wherever located, which the Defendant or others to the Defendant's knowledge have accumulated as a result of illegal activities. Such assistance will involve the Defendant's agreement to the entry of an order enjoining the transfer or encumbrance of assets that may be identified as being subject to forfeiture, including but not limited to those specific real and personal properties set forth in the forfeiture counts of the Fourth Superseding Indictment. Additionally, the Defendant agrees to identify as being subject to forfeiture all such assets, and to assist in the transfer of such property to the United States by delivery to this Office upon this Office's request, all necessary and appropriate documentation with respect to said assets, including consents to forfeiture, quit claim deeds and any and all other documents necessary to

deliver good and marketable title to said property.

19. The Defendant knowingly and voluntarily agrees to waive any claim or defense the Defendant may have under the Eighth Amendment to the United States Constitution, including any claim of excessive fine or penalty with respect to the forfeited assets.

20. The defendant recognizes that pleading guilty may have consequences with respect to the defendant's immigration status if the defendant is not a citizen of the United States. Under federal law, a broad range of crimes are removable offenses, including the offenses to which the defendant is pleading guilty. Indeed, because the defendant is pleading guilty to providing material support in relation to a conspiracy to kill or kidnap, removal is presumptively mandatory.

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21. This is the entire agreement and understanding between this Office and the defendant. There are no other agreements, promises, representations, or understandings and this agreement supersedes any prior agreements, including any Kastigar letter agreements entered.

MARKENZY LAPOINTE  
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

Date: 12/22/2023

By:   
ANDREA GOLDBARG, ESQ.  
ASSISTANT U.S. ATTORNEY

Date: 12/22/23

By:   
ALFREDO IZAGUIRRE, ESQ.  
ATTORNEY FOR DEFENDANT

Date: 12/22/23

By: Mario Palacios  
MARIO ANTONIO PALACIOS PALACIOS  
DEFENDANT